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Washington, D. C. 20013

OKI/COMINT

2049  
MHQ-~~2049~~  
2 July 1982

STAT

[Redacted] Chief  
Okinawa Bureau, FBIS

Dear Jim:

Subj: Service from Soviet TV  
Ref: MOK-2044

Thanks for your letter on Soviet TV tape dissemination. I can assure you that I and many others here share your concern--and, indeed, frustration--over putting the product of a costly, high-tech collection system into a horse-and-buggy distribution network such as we rely on now.

The big problem right now, it seems to me, is not with distribution of VSL's but with the time it takes for the videotapes themselves to reach consumers. As long as the videotape is not available for current analysis, regardless of how quickly the VSL is in hand, consumers interested in FBIS video products are necessarily limited mainly to those doing long-range research and other nonperishable work. For them, the VSL's arrive quickly enough if they hit their desks within a week or two. Analysts now occasionally call up the VSL's from SAFE--and I think that may be the ultimate solution to the VSL distribution problem--but the practice is not common or widespread because of the slow access to the tapes. Other organizations, especially DIA, could make VSL's available by similar automated techniques. But the practical benefit of doing so before the videotapes can be distributed in a timely way is only marginal.

Current analysis, as you know, is very current. Headquarters analysts must go with what they have within very short deadlines. The best way we have now of getting video input into this analysis is the use of FYI's, Analysis Notes, and editorial reports on the Wire, based on alerts from the bureaus containing the fullest possible descriptions of significant video--along the lines of what Okinawa is already doing to some extent.

Some relief is on the horizon with the plans for INTERNET (formerly COMNET), although I have a gut feeling that by the time it comes on line, we may find the capacity of the system, as now envisaged, will be inadequate to fully meet our expanding need to move video. Much greater

tape duplicating capacity and some cable dissemination facilities are also needed to replace the almost ridiculous mailing of a single tape from one place to another over a period of months. Of course, OCR has yet to leap into the breach with the cash to pay for it all, and at last reading the small DDI TV Center was strapped for people, money, and equipment even to do its basic job of making films for high-level briefings.

[redacted] assure me that SOVA analysts are aware of the consolidated tapes of Soviet leader appearances and of other FBIS videofile holdings and plans, that they have been invited to make use of them any time, and that they welcome what is being done here. But for the most part Headquarters analysts are not inclined to sort through and interpret raw video recordings themselves. Analyzing and comparing present with past video material, even on the consolidated tapes, is a time-consuming business; most analysts are no more anxious to do that than they are to keep and search speech files. They want an FBIS filter to provide services when they need them.

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This raises another point many of us have been thinking about, and that is whether some new forms of "processing" video material should be explored. Production of consolidated tapes is one step forward, and I know [redacted] has been discussing with you the possibility of building similar tapes on topics other than leadership. Those are data bases for research. Beyond such research tools, video clips might be put together in future in topical films, like the one AG had done by the TV Center, to distribute video materials on specific subjects such as agriculture or industry, as well as political subjects--a sort of videomagazine. Moscow's 24 June coverage of the launching of the joint space mission with the French, it seems to me, would have been a prime candidate for production of a single tape of "excerpts."

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According to local folklore, some Okinawa staffers once experimented with dubbing English onto videotapes using scripts provided by the monitors. As of now, it is all still in a rudimentary, experimental phase and no one has the necessary resources, but I hope all these ideas will be pursued. AG, Prod, and Ops, along with E&PS, should all be involved. My own association with FBIS video developments will prove to have been too short to have much impact, I'm afraid, as my target date for departure is 30 August.

Finally, LRB will be taking over from OCR responsibility for redistribution of video cassettes to the originating bureaus once consumers have finished with them. Although we don't have any extra help or working space, I hope the better control this will give us will improve an aspect of video operations that neither we nor the bureaus have found satisfactory under OCR's stewardship.

Sincerely,



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Chief, Liaison and Requirements Branch

DDSGT/FBIS/E&PS/

(2 July 1982)

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Distribution:

- Orig - C/Okinawa Bureau
- 1 - C/Ops
- 1 - C/AG
- 1 - C/FCS
- 1 - C/London Bureau
- MIQ file
- 1 - E&PS Chrono
- 1 - Okinawa Bureau file